

THE EMPEROR of JAPAN

ALL ABOUT HIS MAJESTY AND HIS IMPERIAL FAMILY IN 1909.

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TOKIO.—I write today of the most powerful ruler who sits on a throne. The emperor of Japan is in reality stronger with his people than any European monarch. His deities have more weight than those of the east, his commands are laws where those of the ruler are proper, and his word is the law. Japan has a puppet emperor, but the emperor is a puppet behind him. Japan has a constitutional government, but the emperor is the center of it. He is the center of the nation, and with most of his people he is revered as a god. The war with Russia was fought for the emperor. The Japanese asked to battle about his name, and they carried it to their greatest glory in his name. The declaration of war by the emperor is ground into the soul of every Japanese school boy. He forms it with his letters, and recites it on every national holiday. A copy of it hangs in the most honored place on the school walls, and in case of a fire it is the first thing the children are instructed to save.

RESPECT FOR THE EMPEROR.

This respect for the emperor seems to be an inherent part of the Japanese soul. It is so great that the officials will not gossip about him. His personality is not discussed in the Japanese newspapers and no laws are necessary, such as those in some states which prevail in Germany and some other countries of Europe. As an example of this feeling a missionary not long ago, preaching in one of the cities of Japan, made the declaration: "All men are sinners." A soldier standing by cried out: "Do you mean to say that our emperor is a sinner?" and upon the preacher saying "yes" he straightway knocked him down.

When the emperor attended the horse races at Yokohama not long ago a command was sent out that all eighteens must be on the level of the ground when the royal carriage went by. The foreign guests of the hotels were notified that they must keep off the porches and that none must look out of the second-story windows. When the imperial carriage stopped at the ground, the spectators were required to come down from their seats and wait until his majesty had taken his place in a pavilion high above the rest, and they got down again in order not to be higher than his majesty when he departed. It is one of the unwritten laws of Japanese etiquette that no one should look down upon the emperor, and when his majesty goes forth foreigners are warned to show this mark of respect.

Out in the country, where the people have had less contact with foreigners, the regard for the emperor is even more marked. They stand with hats off and heads bowed as he passes along and will not even raise eyes in his presence. There are no cheers, and it is as quiet as death. Take, for instance, his visit to some town like Shizuoka, which has 50,000 people. It is on the railroad, half way between Osaka and Kyoto, and his majesty sometimes breaks his journey there as he goes across Japan. He has a palace at Shizuoka and before he arrives the road between this and the depot is covered with sand. As the train comes in the people assemble about the station and the police arrange them in order. First are the soldiers next to them the school children, and still farther along the road the citizens according to their rank and importance. When his majesty steps out all but the soldiers bow their heads and keep them bowed as he passes. The soldiers themselves appear to stare beyond his majesty without seeing.

I understand that this is so all over Japan, and as the emperor does not go about much it is likely to continue. It may be different when the crown prince succeeds, as he is a great traveler and the Japanese are becoming acquainted with him.

HOW THE EMPEROR LOOKS.

Notwithstanding this secrecy about his imperial majesty, I have learned much concerning him during my four visits to Japan. When I was here 20 years ago they were looking for the imperial palace in which he now lives, and I became acquainted with the late Baron Sanmomiya, who for many years was the imperial high court chamberlain. I talked with the baron about him at the time the war with China was going on, and when I was here in 1900 he told me much of the crown prince and his then approaching wedding. I have learned more about the imperial family from confidential sources during my stay here, so that I feel fairly able to give you something as to his personality.

His Imperial Majesty Mitsuhiro, for that is the emperor's name, was 56 years old last November. He ascended the throne at the age of 14 and has already reigned 42 years.

When he became emperor Andrew Johnson was president of the United States, and his administration has covered the terms of all our presidents since then. He is now in excellent health, in the very prime of manly vigor and he may live for 20 or 30



years to come.

The emperor is tall for a Japanese. He is broad-shouldered and slightly stooping. He has the short legs of his nation, and looks his best on horseback. When he goes out of the palace he wears the uniform of a general of the Japanese army, and has a gold-braided sword at his side. He is dignified and always receives his guests standing. He is cordial to foreigners and speaks in a low, clear, kind voice. The emperor is fine looking. He has a broad and rather high forehead. His eyes are almost straight, although the lids are not so far apart as those of the Caucasian. The eyebrows have an artistic arch indicative of pure blood, and the nose is large with rather full nostrils. The under jaw is heavy, showing determination and his ears are big. His majesty wears a mustache and whiskers. He parts his hair at the left instead of combing it in a pompadour, as do so many of his subjects.

HE READS THE PAPERS.

The emperor is a hard worker. I understand that he knows all that is going on in Japan. He reads some of the Japanese newspapers and keeps a close track of public opinion. He has his readers who watch the Japanese press and mark such passages as they think he should see. If his majesty finds a paper going too far, he gives an order to his censor and the offending editor is warned. It may be that the paper is stopped, and the editor himself thrown into prison. This is so only in extreme cases. Much latitude of expression is permitted and the press is more and more free every year. His majesty sees the leading foreign papers in translation. He takes the chief of the world's illustrated journals and certain special articles are put into Japanese for him, so that on the whole he keeps a good, broad view of the world's affairs.

The emperor is especially interested in the army and navy. He sends his representatives to study the various armies of Europe before he adopted the German tactics, and he still consults with his officials as to military improvements. He often reviews his troops, and during the wars with China and Russia he has kept his hands right on this, one of the greatest military machines of the world.

Within the past year I understand that his majesty has been devoting himself to the arts of peace. He is said to be for peace rather than war, and is now doing all he can to develop the trade and industrial possibilities of his empire.

HIS DAILY LIFE.

But let me give you the outline of one day of the emperor of Japan. He rises early, and has his breakfast by 7 o'clock. He usually eats this meal alone. It is a simple one, ending with rice, which he has at every meal. He eats with chopsticks, except when he takes foreign food, at which times he uses a knife and fork. He dines at noon, and at 5 or so usually has a table d'hôte dinner, with all the European accompaniments. His majesty's meals are prepared in the imperial kitchens,

and the food is carefully examined by doctors before it is presented to him. There are professional tasters, who test whether it is poisonous, and the greatest care is observed as to all things relating to his majesty's health.

The emperor's work begins as soon as breakfast is over. From 8 to 12 he receives his ministers and discusses matters of state. The heaviest work is done in the morning, a part of the afternoon being often used for horseback riding. His majesty is fond of horses, and he has about 300 in his stables, including some fine hunters. He hunts himself occasionally, and has large game preserves of his own, where the woods are full of pheasants, and there are many ducks on the ponds. Indeed, I am told that there are duck ponds and duck ditches in the palace grounds, in which the ducks are netted by means of decoys. Decoys are placed on the ponds and in the canals which run out from them, and then grain is scattered about on the banks of the canals as bait. As the ducks light and make their way into the canals, nets are thrown over them by the imperial hunters, who are hidden in the bushes nearby. It requires considerable skill to throw these nets properly, but it is said that the emperor has bagged scores of ducks in one day.

HIS MAJESTY IS RICH.

I understand that his majesty is rich. According to the theory of the old Japan, the whole of the empire belonged to him and the people were his also. After the reorganization of affairs in 1888 he still held enormous properties, and he owns these today. All such matters are private, however, and you will find nothing about them in the Japanese revenue accounts. His majesty has his own business managers, who make investments for him and who administer his estate. I am told that his income is enormous and that in the past he has been generous in giving and lending from it for the government's needs. At the close of the China-Japan war he was presented with \$10,000,000 as an emblem of the gratitude of the people, but it is believed that this was merely returning to him money which he had secretly advanced to carry on that war. As far as I can learn, his majesty owns almost 4,000,000 acres of forests, which are valued at about \$20,000,000. He has 20,000 acres of other land, worth considerably over \$1,000,000, and about 12,000 acres of real estate with houses upon it. He has also \$15,000,000 or \$20,000,000 worth of stocks and shares, and on one knows how many government bonds. He is allowed \$200,000 per annum to keep up his palace establishments, so that altogether he is sure never to be in want.

THE EMPEROR'S PALACES.

The mikado lives in the heart of Tokyo. The imperial palaces are situated in the center of about a thousand acres of ground, surrounded by three wide moats. These moats are walled with stone and they are crossed by marble bridges which are guarded by soldiers in uniform. The moats in places are 200 feet wide. They are filled with clear water from the bay, and magnificent lotus flowers float upon them on sheets of green leaves. The palace grounds consist of hill and valley; they contain lakes, gardens, woods and beautiful lawns. In the outer portion of the estate are some of the government buildings especially related to the palace; such, for instance, as the household department.

The emperor's palaces are of great extent. They cover three times as much ground as the Capitol at Washington, and altogether they have cost several million dollars. Most of them are of one story, made after a combination of European and Japanese architecture. The doors slide back and forth in grooves, and the inner walls, which are immense sheets of plate glass, set in lacquered frames, do likewise. By this means a number of rooms may be thrown into one. There are also single rooms of enormous extent. There is one dining room that will seat 99 people and a banquet hall which takes about 600 square yards of matting to cover its floor. Then there are ball-rooms and drawing-rooms, studies and libraries and a large number of bedrooms, some of which are furnished in foreign style. The whole palace is finished like a jewel. The floors are inlaid and many of the ceilings are covered with embroidery. One room is lined with tapestry of gold thread at a cost of \$10,000, and the walls of other rooms are hung with brocade silk, especially made for this purpose.

GOSPEL ABOUT THE EMPRESS.

In addition to the emperor's palace she has her own establishment, separate and apart from his majesty, and this includes 200 women. She has her own secretaries, and has considerable to do with the managing of palace affairs. She has a court milliner, with trained assistants, who lives in the palace and who is always kept busy. Her majesty usually dines with the emperor, and often eats luncheon with him. She takes no part in politics, but is

widely interested in all matters of charity and education. The Perseus school, a high-class academy, established for the daughters of the nobles of Japan, was founded by her and she gives the institution her personal supervision. She also made a present of a considerable amount to the Woman's university in Tokyo, and she is always giving to hospitals and other such things. During the war with Russia and China her majesty aided in picking lint and making bandages for the wounded soldiers, and she also sent delicacies to the soldiers in the field. When Li Hung Chang was shot in the face by a Japanese fanatic, at the time he was here arranging the settlement of the China-Japan peace, the empress

herself made the bandages which were applied to his wounds. When they were presented to Li, he raised the package to his lips and exclaimed: "Her majesty's kindness is as boundless as the sea."

The people here think that Li Hung Chang recovered more rapidly on account of these bandages. The man who shot him has been in prison since that time until within a few days ago, when he was released.

The Empress of Japan dresses in European costume on all state occasions, although she prefers the ease of a Japanese gown when at home. THE CHILDREN OF THE MIKADO. By the laws of Japan the succession

to the throne goes to the male descendants of the emperor, and in the case of a failure of direct descendants the throne is given to the nearest prince and his descendants. This means that a woman can never again sit alone upon the throne of Japan, and that notwithstanding Japan has had some famous ruling empresses in the past, the emperor himself is, you know, about the most blue-blooded monarch on earth. The first one of his family, so Japanese history says, was on the throne about twenty-five hundred years ago. He reigned long before Julius Caesar tried to seize the crown on the Lupercal, and three hundred years before Alexander the Great thought he had conquered the

whole world. There have been one hundred and twenty-one emperors since this, and they all belong to this family. Mutsuho has four children, one boy and three girls, but this does not mean that all of these children are the offspring of the empress. According to custom, his majesty has twelve ladies-in-waiting who are a part of his establishment and who serve as secondary wives. These ladies come from the best families of Japan, and they are well educated, intelligent and beautiful. They have their own apartments inside the palace grounds, but they do not appear at the court ceremonies, and none of his majesty's officials will say anything concerning them. The crown prince is the son of one of them, his mother's name being Lady Yangawara.

JAPAN'S NEXT EMPEROR.

And just here I want to say a word about the crown prince. He was born in 1879 and will be thirty years old next August. He was married, nine years ago to Princess Sadako, the daughter of Prince Kato, and he and she have had born to them three boys and four girls, respectively, eight years and four years. The eldest is Prince Hirohito, who was born April 29, 1901. The crown prince has a magnificent palace here in Tokyo. It was built about the time of his marriage, and it cost two or three million dollars. It is largely made of steel and much of the construction work has been done in the United States.

The crown prince is well educated. He has been under the tutelage of Marquis Ito, and his first schooling was in the Nobles' school in Tokyo. He is a good French scholar and knows something of German and English. He is a great traveler, having visited every part of Japan, including its industrial centers. While I have been here he has been making his way there over the empire, visiting schools and inspecting establishments of one kind or another. In my talk with Marquis Ito he told me that the crown prince was a young man of more than ordinary parts and that he had been educated along the lines of modern diplomacy and statesmanship.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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